THE MINISTER OF FOOD (SHRI AJIT SINGH): (a) Food Corporation of India has not yet exported wheat and rice from the public stocks directly. FCI has been undertaking open sale of wheat and rice under the Open Market Sales Scheme for domestic consumption with a view to reduce the huge stocks and making available storage space for ongoing/ensuing procurement, at the following price ranges from time to tome:—

(Rate/Rs. per tonne)

Period	Wheat
April to July. 1995	4150-4550
August/September. 1995	4150-4650
October. 1995	4150-4700
November/December. 1995	4150-4740
January to March, 1996	4150-4773*

*Rs. 4773/- is the rate applicable for sale within 50 Kms. of port towns.

(Rate/Rs. tonne)

Period	Fine Rice	Super-fine Rice
January to October. 1995	6300-6700	6600-7000
17th Nov.. to 22nd December. 1995	6450-6750	6750-7050
23rd December onwards**	6630-7050	6950-7350

"The price of rice for port towns and areas within 50 Kms. thereof, will be Rs. 50/- less than the export price.

(b) No, Sir. In spite of movement constraints, Food Corporation of India has been able to move sufficient quantity of wheat to other parts of the country including hilly areas to . meet the requirement under Public Distribution System.

(c) Yes, Sir.

(d) Twelve meetings of the High Level Committee (HLC) have been held so far. In its meeting held on 19th and 23rd December, 1995, the HLC recommended fixing of prices in terms of dollar payable in Indian rupees and recommended US $ 141.58 PMT for wheat and US $ 246.36 PMT for fine rice and also recommended that the parity between port towns and other places, as also between fine and superfine rice, as existing should be maintained.

गन्ना उत्पादकों को देय धनराशि

*150. **श्री जनेश्वर मिश्र :** क्या खाद्य मंत्री 7 अगस्त, 1995 को राज्य सभा में अतारांकित प्रश्न 873 के दिए गए उत्तर को देंखेगें और यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि:

(क) क्या सरकार को इस बात की जानकारी है कि गन्ना किसानों की 450 करोड़ रूपये की रिकार्ड धनराशि जनवरी माह तक चीनी मिलों पर बकाया होने का अनुमान है, और

(ख) यदि हां, तो इस संबंध में ब्यौरा क्या है ?

खाद्य मंत्री (श्री अजीत सिंह) : (क) और (ख) चीनी इकाइयों की नकदी स्थिति पर निर्भर होने, गणना (विचार) की जा रही अवधि के दौरान पिराई की गई गन्ने की मात्रा तथा अन्य बातों के कारण गन्ना मूल्य के बकाया की स्थिति समय-समय पर तथा विभिन्न पिराई मौसम में बदलता रहता है । 1995-96 चीनी मौसम के लिए 31.1.1996 तक जो कि पिराई की लगभग शीर्ष-अवधि है, देय बकाया गन्ना मूल्य 678.32 करोड़ था । यह कुल देय गन्ना का लगभग 25% करोड़ था । यह कुल देय गन्ना मूल्य का लगभग 25% दर्शाता था ।

Expert Group on Export of Agricultural Commodities and Processed Food

*151. SHRIMATI BASANTI SARMA:
DR. SHRIKANT
RAMCHANDRA JICHKAR:

Will the Minister of PLANNING AND PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION be pleased to state:

(a) the work done up till now by the Expert Group set up by the Planning Commission under the chairmanship of Member (Agriculture) to study the need for strengthening of infrastructure for export of Agricultural Commodities and processed food;

(b) when the report was submitted; and

(c) the action taken thereon?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OETHE MINISTRY OF PLANNING AND PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION (SHRI BALRAM SINGH YADAV): (a) and (b) The Planning Commission set up an Expert Group on 6th December, 4991 under the Chairmanship of Dr. Jayant Patil, Member (Agriculture) to study the need for strengthening the infrastructure for export of agricultural commodities and processed food. The Expert Group finalised its report and submitted to the Planning Commission on 17th February, 1992.

(c) The Report envisages that ihe Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry Of Commerce and other Central Government Departments and Agencies involved in the export of agro-products should draw an Action Plan making use of this report and prepare guidelines for the exporters and farmers having exportable commodities. Copies of the Report of Expert Group have accordingly been sent to the concerned Ministries/ Departments for taking appropriate action on the recommendations with which they are concerned. However, a number of measures are being taken by the respective Ministries for strengthening infrastructure for export of agro products. These include management of post harvest infrastructure of horticulture crops, development of market infrastructure through soft loan, assistance for purchase of specialised transport units for meat, horticulture and floriculture sector, assistance to exporters/producers, growers/co-operative organisations and federations for establishing pre-cooling facilities, setting up of mechanised post harvest handling facilities and sheds for grading, sorting, quality control and packaging, establishing Vapour Heat Treatment/ fumigation/screening machines for exports and establishing cold stores at ports/sea ports for export purposes, assistance for creation of infrastructure facilities for fruits and vegetable processing, preservation and processing of fish and meat and meat products.

Piling up Stocks of Sugar

*152. MISS SAROJ KHAPARDE: Will the Minister of FOOD be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that stocks of sugar have been piled up in the sugar factories of Maharashtra leading to acute shortage of funds resulting in non-clearance of payment of sugarcane prices to the farmers causing unrest among them;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the remedial action taken or proposed to be taken by- Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF FOOD (SHRI AJIT SINGH): (a) and (b) On the basis of the available information furnished by sugar factories, the closing stocks of sugar for the week ending 7th February, 1996 during the season 1995-96 in respect of sugar factories in the State of Maharashtra were 27.71 lakh tonnes as against 20.50 lakh tonnes during the corresponding period of the previous season, 1994-95.

The arrears of sugarcane price relating to the season 1995-96 as on 31.1.1996 of the sugar factories of Maharashtra State were Rs. 99.11 crores as against Rs. 102.66 crores on the corresponding date of the last season, 1994-95.

(c) With a view to mitigating the cash and credit crunch being faced by the Sugar industry due to increase in stocks and to enable the generation of additional funds, the following measures have been taken:—

(i) Increase in the monthly freesale quota.

(ii) Enhancement of levy sugar quota to 3.69 lakh tonnes per month on the basis of the population as per 1991 census, w.e.f. January, 1996.

(iii) Announcement of quota for export of sugar to the extent of 6.5 lakh tonnes.